
March 8th, 2023

Education Committee

HB 6842: An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Local Food for Schools Incentive Program and Expansion of The CT Grown for CT Kids Grants Program

[Your Name]

Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, and Connecticut General Assembly members of the Education Committee. My name is Jonathan Lamboy and I represent Common Ground High School. I am from Common Ground High School as a Junior in New Haven, Connecticut. Today, I am writing on HB 6842: An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Local Food for Schools Incentive Program and Expansion of The CT Grown for CT Kids Grants Program and to ask for your support in moving this bill forward.

Hearing of this potential bill, I was surprised to see how well-built the bill seemed to be. The bill itself has a great benefit to Connecticut schools and school districts. As a student at Common Ground, our school does its best to push that farm-grown food is the best and healthiest option for meals, and with this program, children can receive better breakfasts and lunches without the need of unnecessary ordering from large corporations to receive unhealthy, pre-packaged food. I have seen the food served to students firsthand, being a student myself, and I can say that it is completely unacceptable that the most healthy food option some children are provided is an apple at most.

This bill can provide multiple benefits to Connecticut, one obviously being more healthy food options being provided to children across the state. A very underlying benefit of this is an easier relationship between the school and the food provider. For most schools, it's a simple one and done to order food from a large corporation and build no additional relationships, but with the addition of purchasing farm-grown food, schools can build a bond with the farmers who

take the time out of their day to till the farm, grow the crops and keep the food fresh and healthy. A relationship like this can also benefit students outside of improving eating habits, as schools can teach students about farm processes and encourage them to grow food at home instead of purchasing it at a store. A great benefit is to the schools themselves, as the bill can repay them for creating good purchasing habits rather than simply buying cheap food.

Before attending Common Ground, I was once in a typical New Haven public school, Fair Haven School. This school is one of the schools that purchases its food from cheap suppliers. As a kid, I ate what I had on my plate. During my only one year of attending this school, my attitude was extremely bad, my mood turned sour and my health was at a low with my cholesterol being dangerously high. All of these side effects are due to having a terrible diet. But after attending Common Ground, who typically cooks their food in their kitchen, my health has improved by a high amount and my mood has also become more positive. If you, as a Senator for our great state of Connecticut, truly care for the health and safety of our State's children, you will sign off on this bill and allow it to go forward, for the health of our future leaders.

I urge you to support this funding for this program - it's a win-win investment for our youth, farms, and schools. Thank you for your time and service.

*Jonathan Lamboy, Common Ground High School Junior
New Haven, Connecticut*

Note: feel free to attach photos, quotes, articles that show and highlight the impact of farm to school activities in your community!